

however, (16 not|be) very friendly at the moment and (17 decline) the invitation, presumably because of a dispute about the fence between their garden and ours. We (18 have) the fence repaired last week, since it (19 be) broken for several months, with the result that dogs (20 get) in on several occasions and (21 do) quite a lot of damage. It is our neighbours who (22 be) responsible for the maintenance of this particular fence, and so we naturally (23 send) them the bill, which they (24 not|pay) yet.

'It (25 not|be) so very long ago that man first (26 land) on the moon. What an astonishing achievement that (27 be)! I remember how one evening at nine o'clock Armstrong and Aldrin (28 walk) about and (29 chat) 400,000 kilometers away, and you and I (30 watch) and (31 listen) to them. Nothing like it (32 happen) before and I sometimes (33 think) that nothing like it (34 happen) again.'

'Why (35 say|you) that nothing like it (36 happen) before? Astronauts from other planets (37 visit) our solar system ever since it (38 begin). At this very moment spaceships (39 hover) overhead and (40 watch) what you and I (41 do). As I (42 walk) home the other evening I (43 see) something in the sky which definitely (44 not|come) from anywhere on this planet. And if you (45 think) I (46 drink) you are wrong. That (47 not|be) the only time I (48 see) strange objects in the sky. I (49 see) quite a few over the years and (50 report) them all to the UFO club. One day I (51 write) a book about them. Tomorrow, though, I (52 go) to Manchester to buy the latest UFO literature.'

'I (53 think) about our plans for next week. What (54 do|you) next Thursday evening? (55 be|you) on duty at the hospital?'

'I (56 be) on duty, but I (57 change) with a friend who (58 want) Friday off. What (59 have|you) in mind?'

'How about going to see *Macbeth*? It (60 be) on for the whole of next week. (61 see|you) the play?'

'I (62 see) a film of it once. But I (63 not|see) the play itself. Yes, that's a good idea: we (64 go) and see *Macbeth*,

'I (65 book) the seats. (66 ask|I) Willie to come too?'

'He (67 work), I bet. He (68 always|work). He (69 work) too much. He (70 have) a nervous breakdown if he's not careful.'

1C Use of present for future tenses

Introductory note: We have seen in section 1B that, with the exception of the future uses of the present tense forms, tenses generally relate to time when they are used for fact. There is, however, another important exception: verbs that refer to future time are **not** used in the future or future perfect tenses

directly after **CONDITIONAL** links or **TIME** links;* instead they are used in the present or present perfect tenses:

I'll tell her more on Monday *if she comes*. (Compare: *Perhaps she'll come* on Monday; I'll tell her more then.)

When I've read the book I'll lend it to him. (Compare: I'll lend him the book next week; *I'll have read* it by then.)

The principal conditional and time links are as follows:

CONDITIONAL LINKS

if
providing, provided (that), as/so long as
even if
unless
supposing
whether . . . or
however, no matter how (late etc.)
whoever, wherever, whenever etc.
no matter who/where/when etc.

TIME LINKS

after *while*
before *until, till*
when *as soon as, immediately*
as *by the time*

There are one or two other instances of the use of present for future tenses which, although not so important as the above, should be mentioned. They are included in the Examples and Explanation below. (See also 4Ad.)

Examples

- 1 *Providing* you're back by eight o'clock you can go to the airport to welcome the group. **a**
- 2 You must come back then *even if* they haven't arrived. **b, j**
- 3 They'll drive to the concert hall in an open car *unless* it's raining. **c**
- 4 *Whether* the plane's late *or* not, they'll get a terrific welcome. **d**
- 5 I'm not going to miss the chance of seeing them *however late* they are. **e**
- 6 There'll be a lot of fans at the airport *whenever* the group arrives. **f**
- 7 What will the police do, *supposing* the crowd gets out of hand? **g**
- 8 Some of the fans will be pretty impatient *by the time* the plane lands. **h**
- 9 Here they are! Don't worry - I'll give you your camera back *when/after/as soon as/immediately I've taken* a photo! **j**
- 10 The police will stop people *who* try to get too close to them. **k**
- 11 I *don't care* what the police do: I'm going to get their autographs. **l**
- 12 It'll be the first *time* I've spoken to a pop star. **m**
- 13 (Police officer): Now *if* you girls and boys will all stop pushing and shoving, we'll be a lot more comfortable, won't we? (Exception!) **n**

* Called **LINKS** because they link or join two parts of a sentence together. As you will see from the Examples, either part may come first.

Explanation

- a *Providing* (1), *provided (that)*, *as/so long as* are approximately equivalent. They are all emphatic forms of *if*, emphasising a condition.
- b *Even if* (2) introduces an extreme condition. Emphasis is on *even*, not *if*.
- c *Unless* (3) can generally be replaced by *if . . . not (if it's not raining)* or *providing* etc. . . . *not*, but sometimes more suitably by *except when*:
I won't ever use the car for work unless/except when it's raining.
- d *Whether . . . or* (4) used conditionally must be distinguished from the interrogative link used in indirect questions, after which the future tense may be used:
I wonder whether they'll come (or not).
Unlike conditional *whether*, the interrogative link can usually be replaced by *if (I wonder if . . .)*. * Here again it is important to distinguish between this interrogative use of *if* and its conditional use.
- e *However (late etc.)* (5) must be distinguished from the adverb *however (2Bm, 5e)*. One difference is that it can be replaced by *no matter how (late etc.)*. Another is that both these conditional links include the use of adverbs or adjectives such as *late* except when they mean *whatever way/ whichever way*:
The disco will let you in *however/no matter how* (= whatever way) you're dressed.
- f Similarly, *whenever* (6) and other *-ever* forms can often be replaced by *no matter when* etc. But *whenever* can also mean (*at*) *any time (that)*:
Come whenever/(at) any time (that) you want.
Here, although it is still followed by a present and not a future tense, it cannot be replaced by *no matter when*. The other *-ever* forms may be used in a similar way:
The police will stop whoever/anyone who tries to get too close.
The two different uses can occur in the same sentence:
Come any time (= whenever) you want, whenever (= no matter when) it is.
The police will stop anyone who (= whoever) tries to get too close, whoever (= no matter who) it is.
- g *Supposing* (7) may, like other conditional links, be used at the beginning of a sentence. But then it often does not act as a link, and so one sentence is turned into two. In this position *supposing* can alternate with *suppose*:
Supposing/Suppose the crowd gets out of hand. What will the police do?

* It cannot be replaced by *if* when it is directly followed by an infinitive: 'I don't know whether to go or not.'

- h *By the time* (8) is used when we cannot give a definite time: *by the time the plane lands* = some time not later than when it lands. Note that *by eight o'clock* (1) = not later than eight o'clock.
- j *When, after* etc. (9) are followed by the present perfect to indicate completion of an action. Note also a similar use after *even if* (2).
- k A DEFINING RELATIVE (8Ab) like *who* (10) is used with a present tense to refer to future time when the relative itself follows a future tense (*will stop*). Compare:
There's no one here who'll stop you.
- l *Don't care* (11) is always used with a present instead of a future tense. With *hope* we can use either:
I hope the police won't/don't stop you.
- m After *it will/won't be the first/second* etc. *time* (12) we always use the present perfect tense. Note carefully the corresponding uses for present and past time:
It's the first time I've spoken to a pop star.
It was the first time I'd spoken to a pop star.
You will see that for future time we use the same tense (*have spoken*) as for present time; we do not use the tense one might expect, namely the future perfect (1Bg).
- n The more important exceptions to the non-use of *will* after conditional links are as follows:
 - When we request or hope that people will do something (13).
 - When we use *will not* to mean *refuse* (11Bf): 'If Sheila won't do it, I'll ask Helen.'
 - When a future condition can be satisfied (at least as far as we are concerned) in the present:
Shopper: *Provided* this sleeping bag will keep me warmer than the others I'll buy it, although it's the most expensive.
Assistant: It definitely will.
Shopper: OK, I'll buy it.

Exercise

Choose a correct tense for each verb in brackets. Where there is no verb (—), give the correct auxiliary such as *does* or *has*.

Zena (1 go) to Paris to work in a fashion show and (2 not|be) back until next week. When I (3 see) her off at the airport this morning she (4 look) forward to it very much. Although she (5 go) there once as a very small girl she (6 not|remember) it, and so in a sense this (7 be) the first time she (8 be) there.

Denis (9 continually|urge) me to lend him money for a business venture which he says (10 pay) his creditors back handsomely. I always (11 refuse) his request as politely as I can. He (12 not|show) any talent for business yet and until he (13 _____) I (14 not|lend) him a penny.

Marilyn (15 go) to the States on business in a few days. I am told that while she (16 be) away, Georgina's brother (17 keep) an eye on her firm for her. He (18 help) Marilyn with her business before, and she (19 trust) him implicitly. As long as she (20 not|be) away for too long, it should be a satisfactory arrangement.

Robert (21 go) around recently saying that he (22 think) people who (23 go) to university (24 have) a great advantage over those who (25 _____ not). (26 mean|this) that he (27 think) of going to university himself? If it (28 _____) and if he actually (29 succeed) in getting there, he (30 do) what his father always (31 want) him to do, partly because he never (32 have) the chance of doing it himself. But I (33 doubt) if Robert (34 get) a university place all that easily if he (35 not|improve) his academic qualifications. He (36 leave) school over a year ago with poor grades, and unless he now (37 go) to a college and (38 work) hard to get better ones, few universities (39 accept) him. The trouble is that Robert is not the sort of person who (40 find) it easy to start studying again.

Robert (41 prefer) sport to books, and since leaving school (42 continue) to play a lot of football. In fact the manager of the local team says he (43 consider) Robert for a place in it provided he (44 train) hard. And here (45 lie) another of Robert's problems: he is a sociable, easy-going sort of chap with a strong streak of laziness in his character, whether we (46 talk) of study or sport. Unless he (47 take) regular exercise – which he seldom (48 _____) – he (49 tend) to run to fat, even at his age. Until he (50 spend) less time eating and chatting idly with friends, he (51 not|become) the professional footballer he sometimes (52 dream) of being. Whichever he (53 choose), university or football, he (54 have) to discipline himself. However, a self-disciplined Robert is someone I (55 find) hard to imagine; I (56 feel) that even if it (57 cost) him a career he (58 go) on being the same Robert, which (59 mean) that by the time he (60 be) thirty he (61 be) really fat!

My son (62 study) medicine for six years and (63 take) his final examinations in two months' time. Provided he (64 pass) them, he (65 specialise) in psychiatry, which (66 take) another two years' study at least. So he (67 not|be) ready to practise full time until he (68 be) nearly thirty. By then he (69 study) for a total of eight or nine years and (70 earn) practically nothing. Until now his wife (71 work) and (72 support) him, but she (73 expect) a baby in four months and so she (74 give up) her job soon. What on earth they (75 live) on when she (76 stop) working I do not know. But they (77 not|worry) about it. My daughter-in-law says that they (78 manage) somehow, while my son says simply that he (79 qualify) as a psychiatrist however long it (80 take).

When people retire they quite rightly think that if they (81 work) hard for most of their lives they (82 earn) the right to a bit of comfort in their old age.

Unfortunately, unless they (83 qualify) for pensions indexed to the cost of living, they will be among those who (84 suffer) most if there (85 be) bad inflation in the future.

'So long as political leaders (86 keep) their heads a third world war (87 not|be) inevitable.'

'Whether they (88 keep) their heads or not, they (89 find) it almost impossible to prevent world war unless they (90 succeed) in abolishing the international arms trade.'

'My prediction is that providing a nuclear holocaust (91 not|occur) by the end of the century, mankind (92 pass) the danger point.'

'You're too complacent. Even if your prediction (93 prove) correct, there (94 always|be) a risk of man destroying himself.'

'I (95 come) with you only if you (96 drive) more slowly than you usually (97 _____).'

'I promise I (98 _____). Jump in! You can put the handbrake on immediately you (99 think) I (100 go) too fast.'

1D Tense use for non-fact: supposition

Introductory note: For supposition we use the same conditional links as in 1C and the sentences in which we use them are, like those in 1C, called conditional sentences. But tense use for supposition is different, as the following examples show:

She always *waited* for me if I *was* late. FACT: PAST TIME

I'm sure she *would* always *wait* for me if I *was* late.

SUPPOSITION: FUTURE REFERENCE

The obvious difference, then, between conditional sentences for fact and for supposition is the use in the latter of a **CONDITIONAL** tense. Conditional tenses are formed by the substitution of *would/should* for *will/shall* in the future tenses (1Bf, g, n, q), so that we get the following:

	CONDITIONAL	CONDITIONAL PERFECT
SIMPLE FORM	<i>would wait</i>	<i>would have waited</i>
PROGRESSIVE FORM	<i>would be waiting</i>	<i>would have been waiting</i>